



AMHERST

Hampshire County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

Located in the fertile and scenic Connecticut River Valley, Amherst enjoys views of hills and mountains in all directions. Although originally a farming community, Amherst's main industry is now education, since it is the home of the main campus of the University of Massachusetts as well as two private colleges, Amherst College and Hampshire College. Consequently, the town's population varies from about 35,000 during the academic year to the mid-20's during the summer.

While the town's commercial, social and cultural life benefit from the liveliness and diversity stimulated by the colleges and the University, the town suffers financially from the fact that over half its land is tax-exempt. Amherst has long supported excellent public schools, libraries and town services; it has also worked hard both to preserve farming and open space and to provide affordable housing. Amherst is one of the few towns in the State to have met the State's goal of having 10% of its housing stock affordable.

(Narrative supplied by community)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

West central Massachusetts, bordered by Hadley on the west; Sunderland and Leverett on the north; Shutesbury, Pelham, and Belchertown on the east; and Granby and South Hadley on the south. Amherst is 17 miles south of Greenfield, 23 miles north of Springfield, 86 miles west of Boston, and 157 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 27.75 sq. miles

Land Area: 27.68 sq. miles

Population: 35,228

Density: 1,273 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Amherst Station)

Normal temperature in January.....23.6°F

Normal temperature in July.....71.9°F

Normal annual precipitation.....42.5"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Mt. Holyoke, Mt. Toby, Belchertown, Shutesbury

Regional Planning Agency

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)

Springfield



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (413) 256-4004

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Select Board

Town Manager

Representative Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1775

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

Number	%
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Total Registered 11,653

Democrats 5,942 51.0 % Republicans 1,267 10.9 % Other parties 29 0.2 % Unenrolled Voters 4,415 37.9 %

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Amherst town, Hampshire County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	34,874	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	34,874	100.0
Male.....	16,764	48.1	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	2,159	6.2
Female.....	18,110	51.9	Mexican.....	189	0.5
Under 5 years.....	993	2.8	Puerto Rican.....	983	2.8
5 to 9 years.....	1,208	3.5	Cuban.....	92	0.3
10 to 14 years.....	1,365	3.9	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	895	2.6
15 to 19 years.....	7,571	21.7	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	32,715	93.8
20 to 24 years.....	10,768	30.9	White alone.....	26,740	76.7
25 to 34 years.....	3,239	9.3	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	2,758	7.9	Total population.....	34,874	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	3,037	8.7	In households.....	22,451	64.4
55 to 59 years.....	953	2.7	Householder.....	9,174	26.3
60 to 64 years.....	668	1.9	Spouse.....	3,339	9.6
65 to 74 years.....	1,139	3.3	Child.....	5,132	14.7
75 to 84 years.....	783	2.2	Own child under 18 years.....	4,231	12.1
85 years and over.....	392	1.1	Other relatives.....	500	1.4
Median age (years).....	21.8	(X)	Under 18 years.....	127	0.4
18 years and over.....	30,398	87.2	Nonrelatives.....	4,306	12.3
Male.....	14,462	41.5	Unmarried partner.....	516	1.5
Female.....	15,936	45.7	In group quarters.....	12,423	35.6
21 years and over.....	19,944	57.2	Institutionalized population.....	130	0.4
62 years and over.....	2,693	7.7	Noninstitutionalized population.....	12,293	35.2
65 years and over.....	2,314	6.6	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	886	2.5	Total households.....	9,174	100.0
Female.....	1,428	4.1	Family households (families).....	4,547	49.6
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	2,476	27.0
One race.....	33,705	96.6	Married-couple family.....	3,339	36.4
White.....	27,665	79.3	With own children under 18 years.....	1,653	18.0
Black or African American.....	1,780	5.1	Female householder, no husband present.....	988	10.8
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	74	0.2	With own children under 18 years.....	706	7.7
Asian.....	3,144	9.0	Nonfamily households.....	4,627	50.4
Asian Indian.....	556	1.6	Householder living alone.....	2,620	28.6
Chinese.....	1,188	3.4	Householder 65 years and over.....	786	8.6
Filipino.....	73	0.2	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	2,578	28.1
Japanese.....	205	0.6	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	1,654	18.0
Korean.....	448	1.3	Average household size.....	2.45	(X)
Vietnamese.....	188	0.5	Average family size.....	2.97	(X)
Other Asian ¹	486	1.4	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	33	0.1	Total housing units.....	9,427	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	3	-	Occupied housing units.....	9,174	97.3
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	3	-	Vacant housing units.....	253	2.7
Samoa.....	13	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	14	-	occasional use.....	62	0.7
Some other race.....	1,009	2.9	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	0.4	(X)
Two or more races.....	1,169	3.4	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	1.7	(X)
<i>Race alone or in combination with one</i>			HOUSING TENURE		
<i>or more other races: ³</i>			Occupied housing units.....	9,174	100.0
White.....	28,608	82.0	Owner-occupied housing units.....	4,131	45.0
Black or African American.....	2,233	6.4	Renter-occupied housing units.....	5,043	55.0
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	307	0.9	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.62	(X)
Asian.....	3,570	10.2	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.31	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	73	0.2			
Some other race.....	1,385	4.0			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State: 179

Conventional Federal: 15

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP: 52

Federal (Section 8): 210



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

Amherst is located in the Pioneer Valley, known as the crossroads of New England because of its strategic location in the Connecticut River Valley and its excellent transportation facilities. The Massachusetts Turnpike connects the region to Boston and Albany, New York. Interstate 91 provides direct access to Hartford, Connecticut, and to Brattleboro and points north in Vermont.

Major Highways

Principal highways are State Routes 9 and 116.

Rail

Amtrak makes a daily stop in Amherst on its passenger service route between Montreal and Washington, D.C. via New York City. Direct rail service to Boston, Hartford, Albany, Chicago, and all other points on the Amtrak network is available through Springfield. The Central Vermont Railway offers freight rail service. Contact number: (802) 527-3402

Bus

Amherst is a member of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVRTA), which provides fixed route service to neighboring towns and to the five college campuses. The PVRTA also offers paratransit services for the elderly and disabled. Peter Pan Bus Lines offers service from Amherst and UMass to other points in Massachusetts and New England.

Other

Westover Metropolitan Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility located in Chicopee, has 2 asphalt and concrete runways 7,050'x 150' and 11,600'x 300'. Instrument approaches available: Precision and non-precision. Peter Pan Bus Lines provides daily service to Logan Airport.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

Amherst Historical Society-Strong House Museum
67 Amity Street
(413) 256-0678
Mead Art Museum
Amherst College
(413) 542-2335
Museum of Zoology
University of Massachusetts
(413) 545-3565
The Pratt Museum of Natural History
Amherst College
(413) 542-2165
University Gallery, Univ. of Mass. at Amherst
Fine Arts Center 35d
University of Massachusetts
(413) 545-3670

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

University Health Services

Long Term Care

Amherst Nursing Home, Inc.

Fischer Home

Hospices

Hospice of Hampshire County

Rest Homes

Amherst Home For Aged Women

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.